

Introduction to Peer Review of Teaching



Benefits of Peer Review of Teaching

Peer review of teaching (PRT) can be especially helpful in providing feedback on aspects of teaching that students are not equipped to evaluate. Peers are a good source of information and can provide constructive feedback about the quality of an instructor's organization and planning for a class, the appropriateness of instructional materials and assessment methods, and the instructor's consideration for student learning.

PRT is beneficial for both the instructor being observed and also for the observer. Teaching involves learning from our experiences and the experiences of others. Observing a class or reviewing a colleague's course materials in the PRT process allows observers to reflect on their own teaching philosophy and methods. The dialogue that stems from a structured PRT process can positively impact a department's emphasis on educational excellence.

What Are the Purposes for PRT?

To Improve (formative¹)

- Informal
- Ongoing
- Focused
- Individual
- Private

To Recognize & Reward (summative²)

- Formal
- Specific points in time
- Comparative
- Public

There are many possible components to PRT, including observing the delivery of a new instructional method and reviewing alignment between classroom instruction and assessment modalities.

Formative¹ observations can improve teaching and inform summative² decisions. Additionally, a structured PRT program can make meaningful differences in departmental communication regarding teaching effectiveness. Faculty and administrators can utilize PRT to achieve individual and departmental goals.

DVM Peer Review of Teaching Process

Step 1: Formative Observation

Genuine colleague feedback offers faculty an opportunity to improve aspects of their teaching. In a formative observation, an instructor can choose whether to highlight teaching achievements or materials in their dossier.

Faculty initiate the PRT process with a formative observation:

1. The PPO will coordinate with departmental leadership to identify instructors scheduled for review.
2. The PPO will coordinate with the instructor to be observed and will schedule the observation.
3. An observer will be selected from the DVM pool of observers. Priority will be given to an observer in the same department as the instructor.

Step 2: Summative Observation

The summative observation provides college leaders a holistic overview from which to assess faculty efforts in teaching effectiveness.

1. Following the formative observation, the PPO will coordinate with the instructor to schedule a summative observation.
2. An observer will be selected from the DVM pool of observers. Priority will be given to an observer in the same department as the instructor.
3. Once the PRT process is complete for a given instructor, documentation will be shared with the instructor, department head, and associate dean for professional programs.
 - a. Documentation includes a letter drafted by the coordinators of the Initiative for Educational Excellence which summarizes the PRT observation and recommendations for growth in teaching.

Components of the PRT Observation

Pre-observation dialogue:

The instructor being observed establishes a context for the course and determines the objectives and relevant course materials for the class session to be observed. The pre-observation dialogue ensures communication between the instructor and observer regarding aspects of teaching in which the instructor is seeking feedback.

Session observation:

During the observation session, the observer makes note of specific events during the session (e.g., student engagement at varying time points during the class). Following the observation, the observer uses the Observation Feedback Form to make recommendations to the instructor.

Post-observation dialogue:

The instructor and observer reflect on the observation.

1. Following the observation, the instructor completes the Post-Observation Reflection Form.
2. The observer uses the previously completed Observation Feedback Form to provide constructive and action-oriented feedback in a meeting with the instructor. The instructor utilizes the feedback received to make decisions for future instructional sessions.

**Adapted from the Texas A&M Center for Teaching Excellence (cte.tamu.edu)*